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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 003189

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINS](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: NSA RUBAIE DISCUSSES UNSCR RENEWAL AND WASHINGTON
TRIP

REF: BAGHDAD 2938

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Patricia A. Butenis for reasons
1.4(b) and (d).

[11](#). (U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph 11.

[12](#). (S) Summary and Action Request: In a September 18 meeting with Political-Military Minister Counselor Marcie Ries, Iraqi National Security Advisor (NSA) Muwafak al-Rubaie reiterated the Iraqi position on UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) mandate renewal for Coalition Forces, linking renewal to conclusion of a U.S.-Iraqi security agreement. Commenting on the current security situation and its impact on reconciliation prospects, Rubaie noted that reductions in sectarian violence improved opportunities for reconciliation. On the domestic political situation, Rubaie said that the situation required patience. During his September 30) October 6 trip to Washington with Prime Minister Maliki's political advisor Dr. Sadiq al-Rikabi, Rubaie will likely seek to raise these issues with his interlocutors. Post recommends that Secretary Rice meet with NSA Rubaie, if her schedule allows. End Summary.

[13](#). (S) NSA Rubaie will travel to New York with Prime Minister Maliki September 21-28, and then Rubaie will continue travel to Washington, September 30) October 6. NSA Rubaie will be accompanied by PM advisor Rikabi. Rubaie wants to focus his meetings on the Long-Term Security Relationship, Iraq's National Security Strategy, political issues including reconciliation, and relations with Iran. In addition to visits with government officials, Rubaie also intends to meet with Members of Congress, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the editorial boards of the Washington Post, New York Times, and CNN.

UNSCR Renewal and Bilateral Security Agreement

[14](#). (S) In a September 18 meeting with Political Military Minister Counselor, NSA Rubaie queried her on the status of the development of a long-term security arrangement. Acknowledging the last paragraph of the August 26 Iraqi Leaders Communique (reftel), he pointed to the language in which the leaders "affirmed the necessity of reaching a long-term relationship with the American side." Echoing the communique, Rubaie emphasized the linkage of the renewal of UNSCR 1723 to the conclusion of a U.S.-Iraqi security arrangement. Prior to renewing the UN mandate, he said, the GOI wanted to see a date set for conclusion of the bilateral security agreement. He suggested that October 2008 would be appropriate.

[15](#). (S) Rubaie said that President Bush had told Prime Minister Maliki that he wanted the agreement done during his Presidency. Rubaie added that the GOI agreed it was desirable to reach agreement during the current

administration. Rubaie thought there could be an overlap period between the beginning of the bilateral security agreement and the expiration of the next UNSCR in December 2008. Rubaie said he had not thought much about relations with other Coalition countries but he thought Iraq would probably not need the continued presence of other Coalition forces. (Note: Separately, UK Ambassador Christopher Prentice told us that in a discussion with him, Rubaie alluded to the possibility of involving the British in the long-term. End Note.)

Security, Reconciliation, and Sadr

¶16. (S) Turning to domestic security generally, and relations with the Sadrists, Rubaie explained that the current strategy of the GOI was to include mainstream political moderates and marginalize criminals and extremists. Noting that a reduction in sectarian violence improved opportunities for reconciliation, he pointed to the fact that the current level of violence was about the same as the level preceding the first Samarra shrine bombing in February 2006. Rubaie suggested a combination of incentives to foster reconciliation with the Sadrists, such as the release of detainees and economic assistance for Sadr City; he specifically noted the absence of sufficient housing for the poor.

¶17. (S) Rubaie speculated that the Iranians had given up on Muqtada al Sadr. He said that his speculation was based on an Iranian source. Rubaie regarded Sadr as an ideologue whose actions could not be logically explained.

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Political Progress After the Benchmark Report

¶18. (C) Rubaie said that while in Washington, he wanted to discuss areas where the GOI should focus its energies. Rubaie stated that the GOI was thinking about how to approach government structure. He described two options: a true and full national unity government or a purely technocratic government. His least preferred scenario was a GOI limping forward, merely filling ministerial and parliamentary vacancies. It would be difficult, he thought, to bring Tawafuq back into the political picture. Rubaie said that he believed that progress on reconciliation was of central importance. This was why he favored the national unity model.

¶10. (C) Rubaie said his message to the U.S. regarding Iraqi politics would be that the situation in Iraq was very complicated, and Iraq needed time to make progress; patience was necessary.

Visit to Washington

¶11. (C) Recommendation and Action Request: While in Washington September 30) October 6, Rubaie requests meetings with Vice President Cheney, Secretary Rice, Secretary of Defense Gates, NSA Hadley, DNI McConnell, and

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DCI Hayden. Rubaie would also like to meet key Members of Congress. Post strongly recommends that the Secretary meet with Rubaie if her schedule permits and that Department seek the requested meetings for Rubaie.

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